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LETTER

Seasonable Advice

To a private

FRIEND

(Being a Member of a small Corporation)

About the chusing of Burgesses to sit in the next PARLIAMENT

Showing how every Burgess ought to be qualified, qualified, and im-
 pected, before he be sent to Westminster, to settle the Peace
 of this Nation.

Hear your Corporation, as well as many others,
 is much solicited to chuse RUMBERS for your
 Burgesses to sit in the next Assembly at West-
 minster. For Parliament they will not be a day
 more than a desolative Monster is a man, but to
 make a virtue of necessity for once. I will call them a Parlia-
 ment, (especially if they make gracious Acts.) In this uncer-
 ty affair I hope you will do nothing rashly, but before you go
 to chuse, consider what sorts of men are likeliest to promote
 and settle up in peace, plenty, and safety. Men who have
 been for these many years hid from our eyes, and then proceed

to your particular choicer. Allow me, who am no abettor of any party further then it tends to the publike good, the content of the people, and the preserving the Laws of our Land. I do not mean the by-laws made of late years: I beseech you suffer me to hint to you some sober truths, and believe that I who have lived here, and observed the wayes, designs, and devices of our late State-reformers can give a better account of them then you can that live at so great a distance. I question not but they are all Hobbists in the point of self-preservation, and will catch hold of every twig to save themselves from drowning & hanging; they will leave no stone unturned to set up themselves against the gain over us, though against the genius and vounge of the whole Nation; or at least, to make such a party in the House, as to go score-free with their lives and estates, which if they should bring to pass, it would be such a precedent and encouragement to these very men again, and to future ages to rebel against their lawful Magistrates, to subvert our fundamental Laws, and make new to plunder and rob their Neighbours, as never any Christian Nation ever had: That I may therefore obviate their designs in getting to be choicem again, I shall present you with some observations which will have too much of Truth in them.

First. All the Common-wealths-men, especially the Rumpers, they are a sort of men that endeavour to please nobody but themselves and friends, that sink in the Nostils of all good men, for Phanatick Statists, and this they know full well, so as if ever they should get the power into their hands again (which God direct) they would work out their own revenge, not our Settlement: they will serve the Nation (as Sir Arthur threatened the Citizen in his fury) by forcing a Commonwealth down their throats by the point of the Sword, making all their former Oaths and Engagements of Allegiance and Supremacy. They are men of restless, implacable, yet incessant spirits, men of bloody and devilish minds, who must sink in troubled Waters, who must keep us in the dark as long as they can possibly, knowing their Waters to be counterfeited, who have gotten their Estates by Rebellion, Rapine, and Rob, and by these means they know they can best keep them, and there-

therefore will not spare to let their Neighbours know how
 so they may roast their own Eggs: they are such as fear neither
 God nor man, whose glory is their shame, they pretend them-
 selves the only Reformers and Saints, but if we are to judge
 by the Fruits, they are fitter to hang them to either.
 They are for Liberty, but mainly for themselves, witness the
 Thanks of the RUMP to *Bartholemew* and his gang, for their
 hellish Petition, surely the Corporations have little cause to
 chide them, when they consider what imparall'd Acts they
 perpetrated upon the famous City of London, and what fur-
 ther they had designed against them, (and in them, all Corpo-
 rations, had not our ever-repovved General prevented and
 disappointed them) I believe it would pose themselves, (any
 good man I am, sure it would) to tel any one good Act that ever
 they made or did in their publike capacities, they have behaved
 themselves rebelliously, haughtily, proudly, covetously, and
 this is their best title to heaven, that they exceed the Scribes
 and Pharisees; nay I must add to all the former black Roll, That
 there is no hopes of them, for they have sold themselves to
 mock wickedness and the utter destruction of these Nations;
 their consciences are seised, and they are given up to a repro-
 bate sence, they cannot repent, its too plainly evident, since the
 remittance of those worthy Gentlemen, commonly called, the
 Secluded Members, that the Rumpers have made it their whole
 design & business to obstruct our settlement & divide those wor-
 thy Patriots this being their Motto *DIKIDE & IMPERA* our
 Lords and Masters they would be at any rates, though at the
 price of a fresh War, and a sea of Blood and Treasure. Are
 these now fit to be chozen again? Are they fit to be the Judges
 of our Liberties, who are the Horse Leaches of the Nation that
 have sucked so much blood and treasure from us? Certainly not,
 for they are traytors, these all good men hope the next Parlia-
 ment will call to an account of their Stewardships, and make
 them refund what they formerly so dishonestly got. What con-
 sciences have these men? If you talk with them singly, they
 will tell you, if they may have but their lives and estates
 secured, let the King come with all their hearts. Pretty fel-
 lows! Now you see a but they will drive at when they are cho-

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ten again, to be ten times more the children of the Devil than they were before; (if it is possible) if these men had had the least drachm of goodness in their hearts, they would have shewn it when they had so many opportunities, (better I hope then ever they will have again) I must needs infer from these premises therefore, That these men will never do this Nation good; do not you then put them in a capacity to do us harm: Will you put a Sword into a mad mans hand to cut your throats? These are the Brambles that will willingly accept of their Seats when chosen, to exercise Kingship over us, while the goodly Olives and Cedars will neither seek for it, nor hardly accept when 'tis offered them. Then pray what is it that the People complain of? Is it not encrease of Taxes, and decrease of Trade? Are these the Physicians are like to heal these great sores? Certainly no, for they have ever made it their design to oppress the people, to foment faction, to encrease their own Estates, to ease their own burthens, and lay heavy ones on the peoples backs; you may not fear therefore to conclude with the most and best of the Nation, that they are according to their several talents of craft, (I will not except one) a pack of jarring dishonest, perfidious, hypocritical Knaves and Dark-Lambsorn-men: Alas, the Corporations should never have enjoyed their ancient choises, (the poorest of them at least) had it not been that these Scate-Bats hoped to flye to these dark Corporations to be chosen there. Consider 2 Tim. 3. 8, 9. Now as Janner & Janbrs withstood Moses, so do these also resist the Truth, men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith; but they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be made manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

I shall now proceed to particulars, and tell you what men I would not have you to chuse, and whom I would have you chuse.

1. I would have none chosen that were the late Kings Judges or Jailors.
2. None that were immediate Purchasers of the Kings, Bishops, or Delinquents Lands.
3. None that were members of the late tyrannical Committee of Safety, nor any that conserved or abetted that irregular power.
4. None

- 4. None of the Rumpers, or Phanatiques.
- 5. None of the old Officers of that part of the Army, that were under *Fleetwoods* or *Lamberts* command.
- 6. None of the great long-sitting Lawyers, that are branded for blood-guiltiness, self-seeking, or oppression.
- 7. None that were actually in Arms for the Late King against the Parliament.

8. None (and this you will strange at a little, I know) of those who have onely a form of godliness to commend them ; I mean, demitre looks, and running to Sermons ; without they have estates and parts suitable for so weighty undertakings.

All these sorts are to be avoided as you tender the peace and settlement of these poor distracted Nations : For these are all parties. and not fit to be Judges.

Besides, for reasons following I conceive them not fit.

- 1. These men, or most of them, have had their turns of sitting already (too long for our goods) but would never do good themselves, nor suffer others if they could hinder it. Witness their present contrivances in the House to obstruct our settlement.
- 2. They are such as no Oaths nor Covenants divine or humane can keep within the bounds of honesty, longer then they will keep up their factions and parties ; indeed 'tis onely a halter can keep them from doing mischief (which 'tis great pity some of them had not twenty years since.
- 3. They are such as are most abominably hated by all good men ; for they have gulled us, and cheated us so formerly, as they are never to be intrusted again with publick administrations, but to be called to account for their stewardships as soon as the next Parliament shall sit freely and fully.
- 4. They are such as hate the very name and constitution of a Parliament rightly constituted according to our known Laws.
- 5. They are such as will stick at no wickedness to bring their own ends together, and to put their own fancies in execution, though they wade through a sea of blood, and consume

consume an *Indies* treasure: they scruple not to murder Princes, pull down Cities, break Oaths and Engagements, pillage and plunder whole Countries, because they delight to torment and plague others, and to ensnare their consciences, that they may make them as bad as themselves.

6. They are such as will invent some new damnable Oaths or other, not with any intent that they should be taken; but that they may be refused, and become a snare to men of large estates, but tender consciences.

7. They will impose heave taxes, and cut large thongs out of your estates.

Now to chuse these men, do you not think it were a powering of Vineger into our publick wounds, rather then Oyle; and the way to make wider rents and divisions, then to heal us;

I shall now come to tell you what sorts of men I would have you chuse; As,

1. Chuse Gentlemen of moderate, healing, and pacifying spirits; those of publick and generous minds.

2. They who have great Estates, and great parts; for they will not be so apt to rob their poor brethren and neighbors, nor to enrich themselves: they will be sensible of the great inconveniences that the notion of a Common-wealth, which floats to in some mens brains, will inevitably bring upon us; especially when set up contrary to the peoples minds.

3. Chuse such as are truly religious and conscientious, such as of firm principles, and are not carried about with the wind of every new doctrine; such as will not impose upon any tender consciences, and yet such as will keep up order and regularity in Church and State.

Now when you have once chosen your Burgesses, remember they are to be your Representatives, and you must give them full instructions before they come up. Do not presume to give them more power then you have to give; you must not meddle with the rights and privileges of the King, nor House of Lords, for you have nothing to do with them. But I would have you give them all the power you

you lawfully may, for the making of good Laws, and set-
 ting our Peace on lasting foundations. Charge them there-
 fore that before they presume to set forth any Acts, to call
 in the House of Lords, and send Commissioners to treat
 with the King; that they may be full, as well as free. Our
 Laws will never own nor acknowledge any power the House
 of Commons hath of it self; for it is a giddy-headed mon-
 ster, without any face of lawful Authority, or brains to
 manage it: They *Pharisee*-like; when they once get into
 their Fathers Chariot, with the reins in their hands, will
 quickly set us all on fire. Tell them, if they go on in the
 steps of our known Laws, every one will bless them (the
 most and best of the Nation I am sure will) and they shall
 be called blessed to all posterity: then they will have
 a foundation to stand on; but if they shall go about to seek
 out inventions of their own, and remove our foundations,
 When the foundations are removed, what can the righteous
 do? Charge them that a few private inconsiderable inter-
 ests may never over-poise in their judgments, the whole
 concern and desires of the Nation (nay of the three Nati-
 ons). Let this be their Motto; *Fiat justitia, & ruat cælum.*
 Lastly, consider the greatest number of those Gentlemen
 that petitioned the Lord General *Munck* in his march to
London for a Free Parliament, would have petitioned him to
 have brought in the King, and House of Lords then, if they
 had durst; but it was not then seasonable, that juncture of
 time would not bear it. I dare affirm you will see as soon
 as the next Parliament shall sit, there will be petitions pre-
 sented for the admitting of the House of Lords, and to
 treat with the King. Charge your Burgesses therefore, to
 countenance and encourage the Petitioners, so long as
 they keep within the bounds of modesty, and submission to
 their Councils. Sir, these are the chiefe of my thoughts
 upon this subject at the present; I am sorry you had
 not a more skilful pen to direct: But be confident, I will
 never leave praying to God, that all your Corporations, nay
 all the Countries too, may be directed from above, to chuse
 such wise men as may discern and follow the waies of our
 pub-

publick peace, and not their own, or other mans interests, or
private advantages & animosities. The Psalmist (Psalm 85 v. 4)
desired so the Lord would send forth his word, and cause it to
spring up, that he may dwell in thy court. We shall be satis-
fied with thy goodness, O Lord, even of thy holy Temple. Ver-
ily terrible things in righteousness will thou, O God, do
our salvation: who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth,
and of them that are a far off upon the sea. Now there remaineth
nothing, but (that of course) I must beg your usual candor,
and mildest interpretation of what I have written, and your
pardon that I have detained you so long with a tedious, but
a serious discourse. Farewell.

London, this 12. of

March, 1659.

F I N I S